



San Jose Community College
San Jose, Malilipot, Albay
A.Y. 2020-2021



MIDTERM
GE7 – ETHICS
No. of units: 3

LEARNER'S ACTIVITY SHEET 1

(Ethics Alarms)

Jack Marshall, director of ProEthics, runs an ethics blog (<http://proethics.com/>) and he says:

“Ethics alarms are the feelings in your gut, the twinges in your conscience, and the sense of caution in your brain when situations involving choices of right and wrong are beginning to develop, fast approaching, or unavoidable.” The better your ethics alarm is working and the sooner your alarm goes off the more likely you are to do the right thing, or at least use good ethical reasoning to decide what to do.

He goes on to say “creating an ethical culture is the shared obligation of everyone, and each of us needs to think critically about what is right and wrong, make our opinions known, and never hesitate to communicate those opinions for fear of being „judgmental””. We should be judgmental – civil, fair, open-minded, and also willing to hold ourselves to high standards of conduct. Living ethically is not always easy, but it becomes easier with thought, debate and practice.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Write an essay which aims to present your reflection/reaction about and to critic Marshall's statement.
2. Cite some real-life situation where you've experienced that ethics alarms. How do you say so?
3. Make a diorama or miniature representation using shapes and figures showing a certain situation where ethics alarms. (Take a picture of it and attach the photo/s in your output)

References:

ProEthics

<http://proethics.com>

LSULife (2007). *What is Ethics?* Video. Duration 1.36 minutes.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZlaHxC7BT0A>

Gasper D (2004). *The Ethics of Development*. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.



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LEARNER'S ACTIVITY SHEET 2

(Normative Ethical Traditions: Identifying Right or Wrong)

1. Western ethical theories

Why use ethical theory?

Every day, you probably make dozens or even hundreds of decisions about what could be considered 'ethical' issues. Should I do the washing-up (even though I am tired) so my partner doesn't have to? Should I help my colleague out with getting the report in on time, even though I'd rather leave work early and join my friend for a social meeting? We usually weigh up the rights and wrongs of these small decisions fairly quickly and easily. But it isn't always easy to know what the right or wrong action is. On closer examination, even a question as apparently simple as whether or not to give aid to alleviate poverty may be fraught with difficult issues. On what ethical basis should individuals give money to charity? Is it because we have a duty to give some of our income to help people less fortunate than ourselves? Or is it because we have a duty to uphold other peoples' fundamental human right to live healthy and secure lives? Is it simply that giving money to charity makes us a good person – and, perhaps, allows us to feel better about ourselves? Whatever the reason, is it the consequences of our actions that matter? (For example, is it important to know before we donate money what percentage of our money will go to helping the needy and how much will go to paying consultants or NGO executives?) Or is it purely the action itself (in this case, the act of giving) that is intrinsically right?

These questions are a starting point for a brief consideration of the main traditions of Western ethical thought. These types of theories, which are concerned with how we ought to act, belong to the branch of philosophical study called *normative ethics*. (Remember that 'normative' ethical theories are concerned with moral actions, and with how people 'ought' to live their lives.) Whilst some of the terms used here maybe new to you, the ideas behind those terms will probably be more familiar. Most of these ideas form the basis of modern-day environmental and development policy, and they are very commonly used as the basis of ethical arguments, often as a result of deductive reasoning. When people use deductive reasoning, they are applying a general principle to a particular situation. For instance, a general principle such as 'all people have the right to a clean environment' may be applied more specifically: 'therefore a company should not be allowed to pollute the environment and to endanger the health of local residents'. By becoming familiar with the main traditions of ethical thought, you will be able to identify clearly how you use these principles when you construct your own arguments. You will also be able to recognize these arguments when they are used by other people. By thinking about the problematic issues surrounding these moral traditions, you can apply these critiques both to your own thinking and the arguments of others. If you are aware of some of the theoretical conflicts between these traditions, and if you can recognize when these ethical principles are being used, this can equip you to spot inconsistencies in the arguments that you or others make.

ACTIVITY:

Search for some more articles or write-ups that answer the question 'why use ethical theory?' then read the above selection again. **Make a REACTION PAPER.**



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LEARNER'S ACTIVITY SHEET 3

(Normative Ethical Traditions: Identifying Right or Wrong)

1. Western ethical theories

Ethical Paths

Traer (2013) illustrates the task of understanding normative ethical traditions in terms of different paths on a mountain. For example, when people use the words 'duty' and 'rights', they are referring (consciously or otherwise) to theories that are concerned with right action. If, on the other hand, they are discussing our ethics in terms of our 'character' or 'relationships', then they are referring to theories of being good. 'Right action' and 'being good' identify different paths on the mountain. Ethical theories emphasizing duty or rights branch off the right action path, whereas ethical theories concerning character or relationships diverge from the being good path.

The main fork in the path in Western philosophy which Traer (2013) identifies is that between deontological and teleological ethics.

The word deontological is derived from the Greek word *deon*, meaning 'duty'. It is concerned with right action – in other words, with doing the right thing simply because it is the right thing to do. Deontological theories focus on whether ethical decisions per se are right or wrong, regardless of the consequences or intentions of those ethical decisions.

The word teleological is derived from two Greek words: *telos*, which means 'purpose' or 'goal'; and *logos*, which refers to 'science' or 'study'. It is concerned with being good – in other words, with being a good person with good intentions. Therefore, in contrast to deontological ethics, the teleological ethical traditions concentrate on the purpose of – or the intention behind – human actions. The focus of teleological ethical theories is on what the goal of a given decision is.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Look for Traer's diagram of Ethical Paths. Interpret it using real-life situation/s.
2. Make a crossword puzzle using the important terminologies in Traer's diagram.

References:

LSULife (2007). ***What is Ethics?*** Video. Duration 1.36 minutes.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZlaHxC7BT0A>

Gaspar D (2004). ***The Ethics of Development***. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh